592 sent to stay with us at various times and were sent to schools which taught English, but nothing would persuade them to take any interest in studies. My cousin Nyein Maung, whom I liked very much, could never bear to keep a shirt on, which was why he was always to be found with only a longyi tucked around his loins playing chinlon or helping boatmen with their canoes, when he should have been sitting fully clothed in a class-room.

[601] My young Uncle Pyant, whom we called U-Ngè, small Uncle, had 693 passed his B.A. and his law degree, and returned to Ye in preference to 177 a more modern life in a larger town. He walled off one doorway's space ,64 from the main room of the house and filled it with bookcases, a big desk and chairs for visitors. Outside this room my Uncle Pyant put up a sign saying: "*A-htet tan shaynay gyi:* Advocate and Higher Grade Pleader," and within a very short time became the lawyer of the whole village; but so great was his attachment to this consultation-living-room, which had nothing in common with the rest of Ye, that he relinquished all cases whose developing complexities led client and lawyer to a higher court in Moulmein.

592 Grandmother had gardens about ten miles up the creek from Ye. 244 These contained coconuts, durians and areca nuts grown over about 276 fifty acres for commercial disposal. Around the bungalow in the centre 427 of the garden there grew mangosteen, rambutan, pomeloes and pineapples for eating on a large-scale, clumps of bamboos, a coffee tree, tobacco plants, capsicum, lime and citron trees, lemon grass, and vegetables of all kinds to serve the needs of the bungalow and the household in town. My aunts with one young male relative took turns to live at the garden and help the family that was hired to look after it permanently. It was a dangerous life in these plantations as dacoities were very frequent. [501] The produce was taken down to Ye in a succession of graceful narrow boats shaped out of single tree trunks. The durians and coconuts were [442] sold straight away to traders who travelled between Moulmein and Ye for this purpose. The areca nuts were first dried on a bamboo attic made by an extension of the platform upper storey of the house until it met the back slope of the roof. When they were dried the whole family gathered around in the back kitchen and removed the husks with blunted nutcrackers, leaving the smooth nut to be sold.

244 With the rice from the paddy-land on the opposite bank, fruits, 262 vegetables and spices from the garden, rolling their cheroots with a mix- 226 ture containing tobacco in leaves shed by the areca trees in the garden, 438 and grinding their own coffee berries, my aunts and grandmother only 276 needed to buy a little fish and meat for their daily consumption. This they could not provide themselves owing to the Buddhist law against

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

243 much preparing. It is simply a portion of the field swept clean. It is sufficiently hard from the broiling sun, and a stake is driven into the centre of the circle. Two lines of sheaves are arranged round this, head to head, and the grain is trodden out by slow-moving bullocks in good old lazy fashion. The Christian Biblical precept, not to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, does not fail of observance with the Buddhist farmer. Then the paddy, that is, the unhusked grain, is winnowed. In some places hand-winnowing machines of a simple pattern are used; but ordinarily a far more primitive and easy method, corresponding to the substitution of oxen for threshing-flails, is in use. A man stands on an elevated platform and capsizes baskets of paddy brought from the threshing-floor; the rice falls on a sloping bamboo mat and so to the ground, the wind blowing away a great part of the bits of broken straw, chaff, and light grain. The system may not be very thorough, but it saves an immense amount of trouble, which is the chief consideration. All that now remains to be done is to carry the grain off to the big rice-boat lying in the creek. There it is stowed in bulk; and after a day or two, the farmer makes a start, dropping leisurely down through the network of creeks into one of the main streams, and so making his way to Rangoon, or Bassein, whence he will return in a few weeks with fine Chinese neckerchiefs for his daughters and perhaps a gay Manchester paso or two for himself and his sons—unless, indeed, the Madras money-lender has snapped up all his receipts down in town, or some of the robber-boats that infest the creeks at this time of the year have pounced upon him and carried off everything but the boat and the paddles.

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[674]

243 Rice-farming would be profitable as well as easy work
427 were it not for the reckless squandering of almost all the
433 cultivators. The average rent per acre is under three
435 shillings; the average produce of the land per acre is from eighty to a hundred bushels in the more fertile parts, while elsewhere the yield is from forty to fifty. The selling price of rice per maund (80 lbs.) in Rangoon is between 4s. 6d. and 5s. Agriculturists, therefore, ought to grow rich. But they are too fond of gambling and building works of merit

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14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

244 Garden cultivation is quite simple. Hand tools, such as steel mattocks, rakes and hoes, which are obtained from Rangoon, are employed to prepare the soil. Cattle or water buffalo excrement is mixed with water to a thin consistency and poured from bamboo-spouted metal buckets over the ground. (The use of human excrement as a fertilizer, common in China and Japan, is not practiced in Burma.) During the monsoon season there is, of course, no problem of irrigation, but during the hot and dry seasons the gardens must be watered frequently. This task is often performed by young boys, who draw water from the wells and apply it to the gardens. The work of picking the matured crops and preparing them for transport to market is commonly done by female members of the household.

243 2. Paddy Cultivation. The principal occupation of forty-three persons is cultivation of paddy. This category is here defined to include individuals who own or rent land on which they cultivate paddy, as distinct from persons who work on a wage basis in the paddy cultivation of others. The latter are referred to in this report as field laborers.

243 162 427 178 Of the thirty-four paddy land holdings on which we have data, twenty-nine are rented and five are owned by the cultivators. All but one of these holdings is under twenty acres. This high ratio of renters to owners, as well as the small number of paddy cultivators relative to the total number of gainfully occupied villagers, is reflective of long-run trends in agriculture in this general area. Rural tenancy has been the outcome, in Lower Burma, of a long period of loss of land ownership to moneylenders, largely absentee, through inability of the cultivators to repay loans taken out at very high rates of interest. As tenancy has grown apace, individual cultivators have become discouraged with their small return for hard work. Accordingly, many have given up paddy cultivation altogether in favor of less arduous and relatively more rewarding occupations. However, this trend may be reversed, for there began in early 1951 actual implementation of the Land Nationalization Act of 1948, which provides for distribution of agricultural land to the cultivators on an individual ownership basis.

243 434 For the great majority of the paddy cultivators of Tadagale it is possible to eke out little more than subsistence from season to season. A few, after paying their hired labor, putting aside seed for the next year's planting, and filling the granary for home use, can realize some cash income by the sale of a small surplus of paddy. If the cultivator with a little surplus can possibly afford it, he holds the paddy until the hot season, when the market price is highest.

243 433 The average yield per acre in Tadagale, based on data for thirty cultivators for the harvest season 1948-49, is 19.8 bushels of paddy. This compares closely with the overall average figures for Burma. According to the Yearbook of Food and Agriculture for 1949 (U.N.-F.A.O.) the average yield per acre for Burma was 20 bushels.

243 437 In late March, the paddy fields of Tadagale are burned over, depositing an ash from any stubble remaining from the previous harvest. Sometime after the New Year celebration (which begins about April 13th and continues several days) the cultivators spread manure over their fields in preparation for the coming planting season. The manure is obtained from the Indian dairy farmers of the village in exchange for paddy stalk.

matters, and cases occurred in which he unwittingly signed away title to his property, thinking he was only signing 'loan papers.' In some cases, Burmese cultivators, encouraged by moneylenders, borrowed sums greater than actually required for crop financing and used the excess for sponsorship of ceremonial activities, dramatic presentations, purchasing imported goods never before needed, and so on. 426

The result of this was the tremendous growth of rural indebtedness and much foreclosure by creditors holding mortgages on the land. By the 1930's, about half the cultivated land of Lower Burma was owned by landlords, largely absentee. The once independent Burmese land holder was converted into a rural tenant, or, in many instances, a landless agricultural laborer. Many tenant farmers, dependent upon rent-racking landlords, worked from harvest to harvest with little to show for their efforts beyond perhaps enough of the crop, after payment of rent, hired help, and debts, to feed their families through the planting and growing seasons. Large numbers left agriculture for other pursuits, such as petty clerical jobs in the towns and itinerant trading in imported goods. In Tadagale, for example, in 1949-50 it was possible to record cases of cultivators in such difficult straits that after paying their help and taxes, they did not have enough paddy left for the family granary to last until the next harvest, and were thus in the position of having to purchase in the market, at inflated prices, the very commodity they produced. 178 426 463

2. The Shift in Tadagale. The economic shift within the village may be summarized in terms of modes of employment, resources, imports and exports. 178

a. Employment. Rice agriculture has been decreasing as the land has passed, over time, into the hands of absentee landlords and independent owner-cultivators have become fewer. The tenant farmers are likewise small in numbers. [243] [427]

The manufacture of clothing has also diminished. Formerly, cotton was spun and woven in the village. Now, clothing is very largely obtained by purchase of imported piece goods in Rangoon and having it finished by city tailors and seamstresses. [294]

Oil pressing as an occupation has disappeared. The one remaining presser of oil seeds recently abandoned this work because of the difficulty and high cost of obtaining sesamum seeds from central Burma. [249]

In a few occupations there seems to have been no notable change. These are carpentry and work in bamboo and thatch, which keep a few people occupied; itinerant selling of prepared foods; shopkeeping; and medical practice (indigenous medicine). 178 463

Several occupations are new or increasing in the village. Agricultural wage labor has increased as more people have been unable to secure a living as tenant farmers and have gone to work for others in and near the village. Vegetable gardening, always important because of the nearby Rangoon markets, has become a leading occupation, especially since the beginning of the insurrections in 1948 which reduced the supply of fresh vegetables from the north.

As motor transport has replaced animal transport over the years, the men of Tadagale have been increasingly employed in operating buses. Related to this is the establishment of a repair shop by a motor mechanic to service the buses owned by villagers.

If the umbrella falls down it indicates that the spirit has departed and cannot return. The person who performs this ritual must not talk to anyone en route to the cemetery. 764

On the seventh day a ceremony takes place. The monks come to the house to eat and chant prayers. They are given offerings for their own use and a special tray containing white thread. The monks hold the thread, which symbolizes good, while they chant. The people present are seated before the monks, repeating the prayers and precepts after them. The deceased person is supposed to be sitting on the mat prepared for him and benefiting from this ceremony. Then the people are fed, the monks depart, and the influences of death are considered to be banished. The thread is kept in the house. 764 769

Graves are not visited, nor is there any upkeep of the cemetery, for folk belief has it that the tidying of graves will cause more people to die. The dead are commemorated by the meritorious act of feasting the Buddhist monks.

Associations

Bus Union. Owners of buses plying between Tadagale and Rangoon are organized into a union. In terms of its functions, this organization might be more fittingly termed a mutual protective and insurance association. These are: to prevent outsiders from infringing on their route and competing with them; payment of damages in case of accidents between members' buses and other vehicles or persons; payment of any costs of litigation that arise in connection with accidents; and maintenance of a repair shop and mechanic in the village. Members of the union pay an initial sum to join, plus monthly dues and a small toll fee for each trip that is made. 441 494

Peasants Union. The Tadagale Peasants Union is a constituent body of the All Burma Peasants Union and operates directly under the Insein Division of the parent organization. Some fifty to sixty households in Tadagale are members. When the head of a family or household joins, the union regards all its members as union members. In theory, meetings are supposed to occur once a month, but in fact take place at irregular intervals, whenever a problem arises that is considered sufficiently important to warrant a meeting. Commonly this is a dispute between members over land. If opinion remains divided after considerable discussion of a dispute or other issue, the union meeting votes by written ballot. 467 427 185

The more long-run aims of the Peasants Union concern rent and taxes of cultivators. Protests and petitions are sent to the government when it is felt taxes are too high. The union was characterized as 'an organization that is against the landlords.' At the time of our research, its aim was to reduce the landowners' share of the produce to one-third from two-thirds. The union also favored land nationalization, under which it was believed rent would be paid in a just amount to the government. Just where the Peasants Union fitted in with existing political party programs and alignments in the country at large it was not, for various reasons, feasible to investigate.

Ceremonial Assistance Groups. For purposes of rendering help at such ceremonies as weddings, funerals and initiations, the villagers are divided into informal groups. These are: men's group; married women's group; and unmarried girls' group. The men's group does the heavier tasks, such as chopping and carrying firewood, erecting ceremonial structures, and preparing 575 476

also used to do this. Sometimes they are able to extract about 5 viss of oil each in one day. 226 463 621

"There are also cultivators in the village. Some of those who work INS also own fields. They rent out the land to tenants. There are altogether 12 people in our village who own cultivation fields. But the biggest landowner does not own lands more extensive than three hundred acres. Some own 40 or 50 acres. Some engage cultivators and work their fields themselves, while others rent out the fields for a certain percentage of the produce. 421 463 621 427

"There were paid workers in the IN. They were paid, not a daily wage, but a monthly salary of Rs. 30/- without food. About 50 of the 80 workers were paid workers, though some of them owned shares as well. In addition to their pay, these paid workers received quite a lot of fish which their families went around selling. They get one or two basket-loads of fish to sell, and in this way make quite a lot of money. 226 463 465

"Fish is not distributed in this manner every day - only when the fish start coming down in great numbers. On these occasions however the workers get about 25 to 30 viss each - that is, by the boatload. Ordinarily they are given just enough for one meal.

"I also own eleven cows; eight for loaning out to cultivators and three for breeding purposes. No milk is drawn for human consumption because that is not the custom in our native place." 231 [272]

One yoke of oxen hired out brought U Myaing 50 baskets of paddy a year. He had 4 yokes. They kept by 100 baskets for home consumption and sold the rest at a rate fluctuating between Rs. 100/- and Rs. 175/- per hundred baskets.

In those years when U Myaing works at INS, he has to confine himself to such work only. During those years when he does not work at INS, he buys the fish from IN workers and process them for sale as NGAGYI, NGA-CHAUK, etc. Each year he uses between four to five thousand fish. When U Myain his co-workers could not get an IN, he had to buy fish and make NGA-CHAUK, (dried fish), NGAPI and NGANPYAR-YE. 226 463 433

On his former visits to Rangoon U Myaing came in a boat loaded with NGAGYI CHAUK (dried NGA GYI) and transferred it to the care of a broker in Rangoon. He then ascended the Shwe Dagon pagoda platform, donated money and water, returned to the broker, and went around the town to places like Mogul Street (the Indian quarter) for meats and ate pillau-rice etc. It took three or four days, and sometimes about ten days for the broker to dispose of his goods and in this time he would go round all the pagodas in Rangoon like the Botataung, Sule, Nga-htut-gyi etc. Once he went to a Chinese hotel known as the HAN-HIN hotel together with some traders from DANUBIU. They pooled the expenses. The journey home took a day and a night. He took back with him clothes, longyis, KINGYIS, durian fruit, 226 438 484 [778]